



Committed to the future of rural communities.

Iowa — Rural Housing Programs

# Community Building

## A Growing Family Comes Back Home

### Outline Of Need:

According to recent census data, Hancock County in north central Iowa lost six percent of its population the last 10 years. Attracting and keeping young families is extremely important for rural counties.

A growing family with eight adopted children wanted to move back to Iowa to grow and experience rural values.

### How Rural Development Helped:

By providing a home mortgage loan, USDA Rural Development helped a growing family with eight adopted children move back to Iowa to grow and experience rural values in Hancock County.

### The Results:

Hancock County added 10 residents to its population base.

Ben and Angie Johnston moved back to Iowa from Texas last summer as Ben began his first year with the Garner Hayfield School District.

One of the challenges of moving back was finding a



### Photo:

*A growing family of 10 was able to move back to rural Iowa thanks to USDA Rural Development's home loan program*

house that would be comfortable for their eight children who range in ages from two to 12 years old.

"We found out pretty quickly that it's hard to find a rental home in Garner, even harder to find one big enough for 10 people," Angie said. "When we saw this house with its white picket fence, antique bike with a basket of flowers leaning on the front porch, it was love at first sight."

The Johnston's home had four bedrooms when they purchased it with the assistance of a USDA home loan. After a little remodeling, the home now has six bedrooms, two bathrooms, two living areas, a huge kitchen, a large dining room and room outside.

"Being back in Iowa has been such a joy for us," Angie said. "To be able to give the kids freedom to ride around the block, to the recreation center and water park is so important."

## Fast Facts

**Program:** Home Loan Program

**Demographics:**

Garner, Iowa

Rural Population— 3,129

**Impact:**

- Helped a rural county reverse its trend of losing population.
- Made a family's dream of homeownership come true

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